

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 SANTIA 04258 232226Z

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 /061 W

-----240312Z 012865 /73

R 232145Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4943

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SANTIAGO 4258

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PINT CI

SUBJECT: ADMIRAL MERINO COMMENTS ON ELECTIONS; PINOCHET CLARIFIES

1. CHILEAN JUNTA MEMBER ADMIRAL MERINO TOLD THE PRESS
ON MAY 5250 THAT THE JUNTA WAS COMING CLOSE TO FULFILLING
ITS OBJECTIVES AND THAT HE FORESAW RESTORATION OF THE

ELECTORAL PROCESS. PRESIDENT PINOCHET DAMPENED ANY

SPECULATION THE FOLLOWING DAY BY EMPHASIZING THE
STANDARD GOC LINE THAT MUCH REMAINED TO BE DONE. THE
TWO STATEMENTS ARE BEING READ AS A RARE PUBLIC DIS-
PLAY OF DIFFERING VIEWS WITHIN THE JUNTA.

2. THE PRESS MET WITH MERINO IN CONNECTION WITH NAVY

DAY. THEY QUOTED HIM AS STATING: "THE ECONOMY IS
IMPROVING; THINGS ARE PROGRESSING ALONG THE LINES WE
WANT. WE HAVE ACHIEVED THE MAJORITY OF OUR OBJECTIVES.
THINGS ARE QUIET. AS THINGS CONTINUE TO IMPROVE, WE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 SANTIA 04258 232226Z

ALPPROACH THE MOMENT IN WHICH WE ARE GOING TO SAY: 'IT
IS ALRIGHT NOW, NO MORE. EVERYONE TO THE IDENTIFICA-
TION OFFICE FOR NEW CARNETS (BECAUSE MANY PEOPLE NOW
HAVE FIVE); QUICKLY TO THE VOTING REGISTER AND THEN
TO VOTE'. THIS IS STILL SOME TIME OFF, BUT THINGS
ARE GETTING THERE."

3. PINOCHET TOOK A SOMEWHAT DIFFERING VIEW ON THE EVENTUAL WITHDRAWAL OF THE ARMED FORCES FROM THE GOC. NEXT DAY (MAY 21), DURING A NAVY DAY RECEPTION OFFERED BY MERINO IN VALPARAISO, HE SAID, "WE ENTER A NEW PERIOD: THAT OF INSTITUTION BUILDING. IF WE DO NOT TAKE THIS STEP, WE WILL HAVE WASTED OUR TIME; PUTTING THE COUNTRY, THE HOUSE, IN ORDER, ONLY TO RETURN IT TO THE HANDS THAT, WITH ALL CERTAINTY, WOULD TAKE US TO PRE-1973. THAT IS TO SAY THAT WE WOULD ONCE AGAIN FALL INTO DEMAGOGUERY AND POLITICKING."

4. GOC-OWNED "EL CRONISTA" PICKED UP PINOCHET'S LINE. ITS MAY 23 EDITORIAL ASSERTED THAT "CHILE WILL NOT RETROCEDE". THE EDITORIAL NOTED THE PRESIDENT'S REITERATION THAT THE PRESENT INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS WILL NOT" BE INTERRUPTED BY AN ABRUPT RETURN TO OLD AND DISREPUTABLE POLITICO-ELECTORAL PRACTICES". "CRONISTA" OPINED THAT IN SO DOING, PINOCHET HAD "UNDOUBTEDLY BROUGHT A SIGH OF RELIEF TO THE CITIZENRY". "CRONISTA" SAID CHILEANS RECOGNIZE THAT "FOREIGN VOICES ADVISING US TO RETURN TO A SYSTEM OF ELECTIONS" WOULD BE STILLED ONLY WHEN THE CHILEAN MARXIST GROUPS WERE ALLOWED TO REGAIN THE POWER LOST ON SEPTEMBER 11, 1973.

5. COMMENT: THE TONE, RATHER THAN THE LITERAL WORDING, OF MERINO'S STATEMENT IS WHAT ATTRACTED ATTENTION. THERE WAS THE CLEAR MESSAGE THAT THE NAVY, AT LEAST, WAS TIRING OF ITS ROLE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 SANTIA 04258 232226Z

GOVERNMENT AND HANKERING TO GET BACK TO THE BUSINESS OF RUNNING THE FLEET. WE BELIEVE THAT MERINO ACCURATELY REFLECTED--FOR THE FIRST TIME PUBLICLY--GROWING MISGIVINGS WITHIN THE AIR FORCE AND NAVY. THE ALACRITY WITH WHICH PINOCHET CORRECTED THE RECORD SHOWS HIS SENSITIVITY ON THE SUBJECT. MEANWHILE, THE EXCHANGE HAS NOT BEEN LOST ON LOCAL OBSERVERS.

6. CYNICS CLAIM THAT ONE REASON THE "BOYS IN BLUE" (NAVY AND AIR FORCE) ARE MORE INTERESTED IN RETURNING TO THE BARRACKS IS BECAUSE THE PRESIDENCY IS RESERVED FOR PINOCHET AND THE ARMY. IN ANY CASE, THE GOC CLAIMS IT WILL TAKE UNTIL 1981 TO ISSUE NEW IDENTITY DOCUMENTS, WITH ADDITIONAL YEARS NEEDED TO RECONSTITUTE THE ELECTORAL ROLLS. EVEN THE SCENARIO FOR A RETURN TO ELECTORAL PROCESSES FORESEEN BY MERINO WOULD BE VERY TIME CONSUMING.
BOYATT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: JUNTA, ELECTION FORECASTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977SANTIA04258
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770184-0396
Format: TEL
From: SANTIAGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770528/aaaaaxtt.tel
Line Count: 116
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 27b0bf8b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2405489
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ADMIRAL MERINO COMMENTS ON ELECTIONS; PINOCHET CLARIFIES
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, CI, (MERINO RABAGO, FRANCISCO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/27b0bf8b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009